

# Weekly COVID-19 Update – Sept 24, 2021: Positive Cases and Hospitalizations Decline Slightly

**DOVER (SEPTEMBER 24, 2021)** – The Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) is providing an update on the most recent statistics related to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Delaware, as of 6 p.m. Thursday, September 23, 2021.

A total of 130,444 positive cases of COVID-19 among Delaware residents have been reported to DPH since March 11, 2020. The seven-day average of new positive cases decreased to 464.3 as of Thursday, September 23, 2021.

As of Tuesday, September 21, the seven-day average for the percentage of total tests that were positive was 7.7%, a decrease from 8.1% as of Tuesday, September 14. There is a two-day lag for presenting data related to percent of tests that are positive to account for the time delay between the date of the test and the date that DPH receives the test result.

In addition, 225 individuals are currently hospitalized due to COVID-19 in Delaware, a decrease of 34 from last week. Thirty-six of the hospitalized persons are critically ill, a decrease of six from last week.

A total of 1,942 Delawareans have died due to complications from COVID-19. Twenty-nine deaths were reported in the past week, 12 of which were from a review of vital statistics. The total number of individuals who have died from COVID-19 range in age from younger than 5 to 104 years old.

**DPH Encourages Use of COVID-19 Testing Sites for Non-Emergency**

## Testing:

Hospitals and Emergency Departments across the state are experiencing severe strain on their systems due to new COVID-19 cases. Unfortunately, visits by parents or guardians of children with a fever who are seeking a COVID-19 test and assessment, are contributing to that strain. Parents and guardians are encouraged to use COVID-19 testing sites and not hospital emergency departments for non-emergency situations. For a full list of testing sites visit [de.gov/gettested](https://de.gov/gettested).

## DPH Advises Vaccine Providers to Offer Pfizer Booster to Eligible Delawareans:

Today, DPH announced that the state's vaccine providers can begin administering booster doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine to certain populations recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Based on CDC recommendations, the following people **should** receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after their second dose of Pfizer-BioNTech.

- People 65 years and older and residents in long-term care settings
- People aged 50–64 years with [underlying medical conditions](#), which include but are not limited to: *cancer, chronic heart, lung and kidney diseases, dementia, diabetes, down syndrome, HIV, overweight and obesity, pregnancy, organ transplants, and stroke.*

Additionally, CDC recommends the following individuals **may** also receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after their second dose of Pfizer-BioNTech.

- People aged 18–49 years with [underlying medical conditions](#) (the same categories as mentioned above),

based on their individual benefits and risk

- People aged 18–64 years who are at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission because of occupational or institutional setting, *including, health care workers, teachers and day care staff, grocery workers and those in homeless shelters or prisons, among others.*

COVID-19 vaccine providers in Delaware may begin administering booster doses of Pfizer immediately or as soon as they are able. Members of the public who are eligible for a booster shot are recommended to seek vaccine at existing vaccine sites including pharmacies, health care providers, Federally Qualified Health Centers (for patients), and standing DPH Vaccine sites:

- Blue Hen Corporate Center: 655 S. Bay Road, Dover, DE 19901
- Georgetown Plaza: 19 Georgetown Plaza, Georgetown, DE 19947
- Canby Park: 1920 Maryland Ave., Wilmington, DE 19805
- University Plaza, 256 Chapman Road, Suite 100, Newark, DE 19702

According to CDC, while data show vaccines remain effective in preventing hospitalization and severe disease, a booster shot will help provide continued protection against severe disease in these populations who are especially at risk for severe COVID-19, including those over 65, residents of long-term care facilities, and persons 50 – 64 with underlying health conditions. DPH is encouraging individuals in these most at-risk categories to seek booster vaccines first.

### **COVID-19 Vaccinations:**

According to data the CDC, 78% of Delawareans ages 18+ have received at least one dose of the vaccine. As of 12:01 a.m. September 24, 2021, a total of 1,158,602

administered doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been reported to the state's immunization information system, DelVAX. Among Delawareans 12+, 572,973 have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, and 519,380 Delawareans are fully vaccinated. Delaware's latest COVID-19 vaccination statistics can be found under the Vaccine Tracker dashboard at [de.gov/healthycommunity](https://de.gov/healthycommunity).

The science is clear that the vaccines are extremely safe and effective and Delawareans who are fully vaccinated have significant protection from COVID-19 infection and serious illness. All qualifying Delawareans should get vaccinated. For the latest information on the COVID-19 vaccine and the vaccination rollout in Delaware, visit [de.gov/getmyvaccine](https://de.gov/getmyvaccine).

### **COVID-19 Case Vaccination Status Report:**

The following report captures a weekly breakdown of vaccination status for cases, deaths, and hospitalizations for the time frame for September 13 – September 19. The report highlights the significant percentage of cases and hospitalized individuals in Delaware who are unvaccinated, or only partially vaccinated. Vaccination continues to be the most important factor in reducing deaths and hospitalizations from COVID-19.

Weekly Overview (9/13 -9/19)	
<b>Unvaccinated Cases</b>	
Total Unvaccinated / Partially Vaccinated Cases	2472
Total Cases	3164

<b>Percent of Unvaccinated / Partially Vaccinated Cases</b>	<b>78%</b>
<b>Hospitalizations</b>	
Unvaccinated / Partially Vaccinated Hospitalized Cases	98
Total Hospitalized Cases	124
<b>Percent of Unvaccinated / Partially Vaccinated Hospitalized Cases</b>	<b>79%</b>
<b>Deaths</b>	
Unvaccinated / Partially Vaccinated COVID-19 Deaths	11
Total COVID-19 Deaths	18
<b>Percent of Unvaccinated / Partially Vaccinated COVID-19 Deaths</b>	<b>61%</b>

### **Breakthrough Cases:**

To date, 519,380 Delawareans have been fully vaccinated. Of those, there have been 3,359 breakthrough cases of COVID-19, occurring in approximately six-tenths of 1 percent of vaccinated individuals. Sixty-six of the reported breakthrough cases identified since vaccinations began involved hospitalizations and 39 individuals passed away, although it does not mean COVID-19 was the cause of death. Breakthrough cases continue to be extremely rare. The best way to prevent serious illness from COVID-19 is to get vaccinated.

A breakthrough case is defined as testing positive for COVID-19 after an individual has been fully vaccinated for two weeks or more – although it does not mean that the infection occurred after vaccination.

### **Update on COVID-19 Variant Cases in Delaware:**

As of Friday, September 24, the Division of Public Health has identified the following COVID-19 variants in Delaware through routine surveillance of test specimens. These variants are based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) list of Variants of Concern and Variants of Interest. *The below table represents cumulative totals.*

<b>Variants of Concern</b>		
<b>Variant</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b># of cases</b>
Alpha/B.1.1.7	United Kingdom	1008
Beta/B.1.351	South Africa	1
Gamma/P.1	Brazil	64
Delta/B.1.617.2	India	1038

<b>Variants of Interest</b>		
<b>Variant</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b># of cases</b>
Eta/B.1.525	UK/Nigeria (formerly New York, US)	2
Iota/B.1.526/B.1526.1	New York, US	352

Of the test samples that were sequenced in the last week, 230 (71.9%) of the 320 test samples sequenced at the DPH Lab were

positive for a variant strain, as were 12 additional specimens sequenced at an outside lab. All but one of the 242 variant positive samples this week were identified as the Delta variant strain; the other sample was identified as the Mu variant. The Delaware Public Health Laboratory has sequenced 4,825 specimens for COVID-19 variant strains to date.

Virus mutation is common. Sequencing for variants is a complex process and is not used for diagnosing COVID-19 but is used after a positive case of COVID-19 has been identified for surveillance purposes, or in identifying the presence of a variant strain in the community.

For more information regarding CDC variant classifications, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/variant-surveillance/variant-info.html>.

### **DPH COVID Vaccine Mobile Units:**

DPH officials in partnership with medical staff from the Delaware National Guard (DNG) have launched mobile units to offer COVID-19 vaccines in underserved communities. The mobile units, which utilize trailers to transport the vaccine and provide vaccinations, are scheduled to visit these communities in New Castle, Kent and Sussex counties next week. COVID-19 testing will be available at each location.

#### Monday, September 27

Governors Square Shopping Center, 901 Governors Place, Bear,  
11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

#### Tuesday, September 28

Royal Farms, 6538 Halltown Road, Hartly, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00  
p.m.

Gateway South Shopping Center, 250 Gateway S. Blvd., Dover,  
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

### Wednesday, September 29

Wilmington Farmers Market, 1000 N. Market St., Wilmington, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Dover Housing Authority, 375 Simon Circle, Dover, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Wawa, 1525 E. Lebanon Road, Dover, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Adams Four Shopping Center, 800 W. Third St., Wilmington, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

### Thursday, September 30

Simmons Feed Ingredients, 7494 Federalsburg Road, Bridgeville, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

### Friday, October 1

Latin American Community Center, 301 N. Harrison St., Wilmington, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

\*dates may be rescheduled if there is inclement weather

For a full list of community-based events statewide including those organized by vaccinating partners and community groups at [de.gov/getmyvaccine](https://de.gov/getmyvaccine).

### **Long-term Care Statistics:**

As of 6:00 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 23, there have been a total of 2,890 positive COVID-19 cases involving long-term care residents, and 841 residents of Delaware long-term care facilities have died from complications related to COVID-19.

### **Symptoms and Testing:**

It's especially important for unvaccinated persons to be aware of and self-monitor for the symptoms of COVID-19. DPH recommends that unvaccinated people get tested once a



week. Even fully vaccinated persons should get tested if they develop symptoms or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19.

If you are sick with any of the following symptoms, stay home: fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, muscle aches, fatigue, chills, shaking with chills, loss of smell or taste, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, or headache or congestion or runny nose without a known cause such as allergies. Other symptoms such as abdominal pain or lack of appetite have been identified as potential symptoms related to COVID-19 and may prompt further screening, action or investigation by a primary care provider.

Individuals with general questions about COVID-19 should call Delaware 2-1-1, individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing can text their ZIP code to 898-211, or email [delaware211@uwde.org](mailto:delaware211@uwde.org). Hours of operation are:

Monday – Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Saturday: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Medically related questions regarding testing, symptoms, and health-related guidance can be submitted by email at [DPHCall@delaware.gov](mailto:DPHCall@delaware.gov).

Delawareans 18 or older are encouraged to download COVID Alert DE, Delaware's free exposure notification app to help protect your neighbors while ensuring your privacy. Download on the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#)

Questions related to business re-openings or operations as businesses re-open should go to [COVID19FAQ@delaware.gov](mailto:COVID19FAQ@delaware.gov). Questions regarding unemployment claims should be emailed to: [UIClaims@delaware.gov](mailto:UIClaims@delaware.gov).

DPH will continue to update the public as more information becomes available. For the latest on Delaware's response, go

to [de.gov/coronavirus](https://www.de.gov/coronavirus).